

CHAPTER 9

LAND USE

Chapter 9 –Land Use

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INTRODUCTION

Land use is at the heart of planning for the future of the city. The extent, timing, and location of new development, or reuse of existing developed land, depend in large part on the factors covered in the other chapters. Population change, economic development, community facilities, housing, the transportation system, and natural and historic resources all impact land use.

This chapter summarizes existing land use and development patterns in Augusta and, in accordance with state planning standards, highlights areas requiring special attention. It also describes and maps the preliminary recommended “character areas” in the county. The character area format provides the community with a framework for establishing the policies, strategies, projects, incentives and or regulations to guide future development in a manner consistent with the city’s vision. **Note that while the “character areas” were identified based on the definition in O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1-.09, the term “neighborhood area” is used throughout the text of the Comprehensive Plan in describing each “character area.” The change from “character area” to “neighborhood area” is based on public input received during development of the *Community Agenda*.**

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ (DCA) “Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning” includes a list of standard land use categories. The following section provides an overview of the land use categories Augusta-Richmond County has opted to utilize in order to inventory current land uses. A breakdown of current land uses in Augusta-Richmond County is also included on the Existing Land Use map.

- **Rural Residential** – This category includes residential uses at a density of less than one unit per acre. The majority of this acreage consists of single-family detached homes and manufactured homes on relatively large lots, most of which are located in the extreme southern part of the city.
- **Low-Density Urban Residential** – This category includes residential uses at a density of one-to-six units per acre. The majority of this acreage consists of single-family, detached houses clustered in subdivisions located between major arterial highways and collector streets. Several older neighborhoods contain high concentrations of historic single-family and duplex residential structures. Manufactured homes comprise about 8% of the housing market and are located on individual lots and in manufactured home parks.
- **High-Density Urban Residential** - The bulk of the high-density residential land use is in apartment complexes located in close proximity to major roads, shopping centers and entertainment facilities. It also includes Augusta Housing Authority complexes scattered around the city.
- **Professional Office** – Professional offices are located in a variety of settings, including high-rise office buildings, office parks, stand-alone structures, and converted residences. In Augusta they tend to be concentrated near institutional uses, such as hospitals and government facilities, and in suburban locations visible and accessible to the general public. The few high-rise office buildings in Augusta are located downtown, in the mid-town medical complex and in the vicinity of the I-520 / Wheeler Road interchange.

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- **Commercial** – Commercial uses are concentrated in downtown Augusta, in strip centers and individual lots on arterial streets, in shopping centers, and on scattered sites in older neighborhoods. The largest centers are located at interstate highway interchanges or in close proximity to them. In terms of square footage, the largest shopping centers in Augusta are the Augusta Mall and the Augusta Exchange Shopping Center.
- **Industrial** – This category includes manufacturing, warehousing, and surface mining land uses. It also includes the city landfill. Major manufacturing plants are situated in industrial parks, or on individual sites, in the east and southeast portions of the city. Some are also located on scattered sites in the downtown area and in the older city neighborhoods. Light industrial uses and warehousing operations are located along some of the collector roads near Interstate 20 and the Bobby Jones Expressway. Surface mining operations (e.g. rock, clay, kaolin) are located in the north and east parts of the city and near Hephzibah.
- **Public / Institutional** – This category includes certain government offices and facilities, and institutional land uses. Government uses include the municipal building and other government structures, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations and similar uses. Examples of institutional land uses include hospitals, churches, cemeteries and colleges.

A number of government offices and facilities are located in downtown Augusta, including the city's municipal building, the state Department of Labor, the main U.S. Post Office, the main branch of the regional library, and federal, state and local courts. The mid-town area includes a mix of public and institutional uses, including University Hospital, the Medical College of Georgia (MCG), MCG Hospital and Clinics, MCG Children's Medical Center, the Charlie Norwood Veterans Administration Medical Center (Downtown Division), Paine College, Walton Rehabilitation Hospital and Select Specialty Hospital. Augusta State University, the Uptown Division of the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, Trinity Hospital of Augusta Hospital and Doctors Hospital are other major institutional uses. Elementary and secondary schools, churches, city fire stations, branch libraries and post offices are scattered throughout the city. Major state and federal institutions include Gracewood State School and Hospital, Georgia Regional Hospital, the Youth Development Center, and the Fort Gordon Military Reservation.

- **Transportation / Communications / Utilities** - The vast majority of this acreage is in street and highway rights-of-way, but there are also two airports, parts of two railroad mainlines and two switchyards, utility substations, radio towers and cellular towers.
- **Park / Recreation / Conservation** – This category includes land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. Examples include the city's park and recreation facilities scattered throughout the community, several public and private golf courses, the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area, the Phinizy Swamp Wildlife Management Area, and land purchased or donated under the Community Greenspace Program. The largest recreation facilities include Diamond Lakes Regional Park, Pendleton King Park, Lake Olmstead and Julian Smith Casino. Golf Courses include the Augusta Golf Club, Forest Hills Golf Course, and Augusta Country Club, the Augusta National, Goshen Plantation, Green Meadows and Pointe South.

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- **Agriculture** – This category includes land dedicated to agriculture, farming (cropland, livestock production, specialty farms) or other similar rural uses such as pasture land not in commercial use. Such uses are scattered across the southern part of the city.
- **Forestry** – This category includes land dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting or similar uses such as woodlands not in commercial use. Such uses are scattered across the southern part of the city and on Fort Gordon.
- **Undeveloped and Unused** – These categories include land not developed or not being used for a specific purpose. Examples include vacant lots scattered throughout many neighborhoods, vacant structures that are dilapidated, and floodplains of the Savannah River and local creeks.
- **Mixed Use** – This land use category was not included because there are no areas in the city in which a mix of land uses are required or are balanced in some way. The Central Business District does contain more of a mix of land uses than any other area of the city, including an increasing number of loft apartments, but commercial and institutional land uses tend to predominate on their own individual lots in the CBD.

In addition, there are approximately twelve (12) Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) scattered throughout the city. The PUD regulations do not mandate a specific mix of land uses and have been employed primarily as a means to develop residential subdivisions at a slightly higher density than in other zoning classifications.

EXISTING LAND USE

Augusta is characterized by land uses reflecting an older city combined with newer suburbs and semi-rural areas. Land use within the old city limits includes neighborhoods of varying ages, a central business district, concentrations of public / institutional uses, commercial uses in shopping centers and on individual sites, and industrial uses on scattered sites. These uses are connected by a series of streets and highways, most of which are laid out on a grid pattern. In many cases, residential, commercial and industrial uses are in close proximity to one another, reflecting development that occurred prior to enactment of the local zoning ordinance.

In contrast, that part of the city formerly in unincorporated Richmond County is characterized by a land use pattern more like a community that developed after World War II. Major urban land uses (residential, commercial, industrial and institutional) are separated from one another. Detached, single-family residences in subdivisions, apartment complexes, and manufactured homes are the predominant residential uses. Strip commercial development is prevalent along all of the major arterial highways and consists of shopping centers, office complexes, and businesses on individual sites. Major manufacturing plants are situated in industrial parks or on individual sites in close proximity to highways and railroad lines. At the fringe of the urbanized part of the city, development becomes sparse and gives way to more open space, the occasional farm, residences on larger lots, and woodlands.

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Table L-1 shows the breakdown of existing land use in acres. Of note is the high percentage of low-density residential land use and the fact that Fort Gordon covers approximately one-fifth of Richmond County's land area. It is important to note that a large percentage of Fort Gordon is forested land. The total amount of undeveloped land is a little deceptive because rural residential and forest lands also have the potential for being converted to more intense uses.

**Table L-1
Existing Land Use
Augusta and Richmond County, 2007**

	Augusta		Richmond County	
LAND USE CATEGORY	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
RESIDENTIAL	55,240	36.4%	57,516	27.4%
Low - Density Urban Residential	33,675	22.2%	34,746	16.5%
High - Density Urban Residential	1,506	1.0%	1,506	0.7%
Rural Residential	20,059	13.2%	21,264	10.1%
COMMERCIAL	4,552	3.0%	4,573	2.2%
OFFICE / PROFESSIONAL	655	0.4%	657	0.3%
INDUSTRIAL	10,372	6.8%	10,571	5.0%
PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL	8,177	5.4%	8,314	4.0%
FORT GORDON (Other Public)			44,416	21.1%
TRANSPORTATION / COMM. / UTILITIES	8,300	5.5%	8,673	4.1%
PARKS / RECREATION / CONSERVATION	6,789	4.5%	6,819	3.2%
AGRICULTURE	3,189	2.1%	10,592	5.0%
FORESTRY	26,595	17.5%	26,687	12.7%
UNDEVELOPED	23,524	15.5%	26,857	12.8%
UNUSED (Water)	4,371	2.9%	4,533	2.2%
TOTAL	151,731	100.0%	210,208	100.0%

**SOURCE: Augusta-Richmond County Geographic Information System,
Calculations by the Augusta-Richmond County Planning Commission**

AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

In preparing the Community Assessment it is necessary to evaluate existing land development patterns to determine if any areas within the city should be given special attention. The documentation contained in preceding chapters, along with the information obtained from public meetings, interviews and field research, helped identify certain "areas requiring special attention." The areas described in this section are grouped in accordance with the "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," and are incorporated into the preliminary character (neighborhood) area recommendations.

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Significant Natural and Cultural Resources

Water Resources, Agricultural and Forest Land - Augusta-Richmond County is rich in natural resources. These resources include rivers and creeks, floodplains, soils, aquifers, water recharge areas, watersheds, wetlands, prime agricultural and forestlands. In addition, some of the open spaces in the rural parts of the county may provide opportunities for community enhancement through their protection and use as natural areas.

Historic Landmarks, Districts and Properties - There are eight (8) National Register Historic Districts in Augusta, encompassing approximately 6,200 properties. Thirty-four (34) properties are listed individually on the National Register. These districts and properties represent many aspects of Augusta's history and include the central business district, industrial facilities, urban neighborhoods, institutional buildings, and rural resources. Three areas - Downtown, Summerville and Olde Town - have also been designated as local historic districts under the city's historic preservation ordinance.

Archaeological Resources - Archaeological resources are located on sites throughout Richmond County. Some sites contain either pre-historic or historic artifacts.

Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Use is Likely

South Augusta - Richmond – Low-density residential development continues to spread out along and near most of the major arterial and collector roads, especially south of Tobacco Road out toward the Hephzibah-McBean areas. The recent widening of Peach Orchard Road, other planned road improvement projects, and the availability of newer public facilities and services will increase development pressure in the area.

Jimmie Dyess Parkway / Belair Road Corridor – Low-density residential development has been steadily increasing in the area west of Augusta Mall since Jimmie Dyess Parkway opened in October 1998. Commercial development is now starting to follow the construction of new houses. The extension of sanitary sewer service to part of the area, coupled with new missions at Fort Gordon, will increase development pressure in these corridors.

This is an area of particular concern because of its proximity to Fort Gordon. Augusta-Richmond County has been an active supporter of the fort for many years and is committed to continuing a mutually beneficial relationship. This includes taking steps to minimize the impact of urban development adjacent to the fort and consulting with the fort on issues of mutual interest. City representatives were active participants in the development of the *Fort Gordon Joint Land Use Study (August 2005)* and the recommended implementation measures. The study recommendations provide a framework for action to prevent undue encroachment on the fort and the surrounding area. Additional information about the community's relationship with Fort Gordon can be found in Chapter 10, Intergovernmental Coordination.

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Areas Where Development May Outpace Resources and Services

See previous subsection titled “Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Use is Likely.” Sanitary sewer service, road improvements and alternative modes of transportation are the most likely public resources to be lacking or in need of upgrades in these areas.

Areas in Need of Redevelopment and / or Aesthetic Improvements

Downtown Augusta – The Central Business District has been the focus of a significant amount of redevelopment and revitalization over the last 25 years. Now that the majority of projects from the 1982 downtown development plan are complete, a consultant is being hired to prepare a plan to include a second generation of projects. Work on the new downtown development plan will start in 2008.

Inner-City Neighborhoods – Several inner-city neighborhoods have been the focus of redevelopment projects for a number of years. Public, private and non-profit entities have all played a role in redevelopment efforts. Declining population and the presence of many dilapidated structures and vacant lots are just some of the indicators that much remains to be done to improve these neighborhoods. Additional neighborhood level planning projects are underway at the present time, and the public and private sectors continue to work together on projects of mutual interest. The targeted neighborhoods include East Augusta, Olde Town, May Park, Laney-Walker, Bethlehem, Turpin Hill, Harrisburg (including West End) and Sand Hills.

Older Suburban Shopping Centers – Several older suburban shopping centers have been successfully rehabilitated in recent years. Some are being adaptively reused as office buildings, call centers, fitness centers and churches. Others have been upgraded for continued use as commercial centers. Some remain vacant and the result has been the blight caused by abandoned storefronts (e.g. boarded-up display windows, empty parking lots) and a decrease in services available to adjoining neighborhoods. The most visible example is the vacant, 800,000 square-foot former Regency Mall located at the intersection of Deans Bridge Road and Gordon Highway.

First Ring Suburbs – Some subdivisions that developed shortly after World War II are now experiencing some of the problems associated with inner-city neighborhoods, such as increased crime, decline in population, vacant structures and lack of property maintenance. This problem has been recognized and the initial target area for redevelopment is the Dover-Lyman neighborhood. Hyde Park, Aragon Park and South Turpin Hill are other suburbs in need of redevelopment.

Gateways and Gateway Corridors – The clean appearance and regular maintenance of gateways make a positive first impression with visitors. There are a number of important gateways into the city, such as interstate interchanges, 13th Street, Gordon Highway, Doug Barnard Parkway, Peach Orchard Road, Sand Bar Ferry Road, the Calhoun Expressway and Riverwatch Parkway. The recent completion of Phase I of a Wayfinding Signage Program is one component of gateway improvements. The Corridor and Gateway Action Plan (June 2000) could serve as a template for upgrades to these gateways and corridors.

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Large Abandoned Structures or Sites

Large Abandoned Sites – Includes the previously-mentioned Regency Mall Site and some hazardous waste sites. Some of the listed hazardous waste sites (Atlanta Gas Light, Southern Wood Piedmont, and Goldberg Brothers) have been the focus of clean-up projects in recent years. A plan for the future of neighborhood adjoining some of these sites, such as Hyde Park and Aragon Park, is still being formulated.

Areas with Significant Infill Opportunities

See previous subsection titled “Areas in Need of Redevelopment.” Infill opportunities exist on scattered sites elsewhere in the city.

Areas with Significant Disinvestment

See previous subsection titled “Areas in Need of Redevelopment.” Focus especially on inner-city neighborhoods.

PRELIMINARY NEIGHBORHOOD (CHARACTER) AREAS

Note that while the “character areas” were identified based on the definition in O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1-.09, the term “neighborhood area” is used throughout the text of the Comprehensive Plan in describing each “character area.” The change from “character area” to “neighborhood area” is based on public input received during development of the *Community Agenda*.

In addition to information on land use, state planning regulations require that the Community Assessment include a description and map of recommended character areas in the city. State planning regulations define character areas as a specific geographic area within the community that:

1. has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
2. has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into a more attractive village development pattern); or
3. Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.).

Neighborhood (character) areas in Augusta were delineated not solely on the basis of land use, but rather after considering a number of factors. In most cases, neighborhood (character) areas included a mix of land uses. Among the major factors used to delineate character areas in Augusta were the following:

- Street design and layout (grid, curvilinear)
- Size and arrangement of lots
- Site design features (size and orientation of structures, setbacks, location of parking, landscaping & other amenities)

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- Intensity of development (low, medium, high; urban, suburban, rural)
- Natural features and landmarks (rivers, streams, historic properties)
- The way land uses interact with one another
- Amount of open space
- Building sizes and styles
- Accessibility (vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, the disabled)

The neighborhood areas then serve as planning sub-areas within the city. Based on additional public input, the Community Agenda will include policies, strategies, projects, incentives, and regulations applicable to each of the neighborhood areas. The purpose of these policies, strategies, projects, incentives and regulations will be to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence future development patterns in a manner consistent with the City's vision. This is a preliminary list of recommended neighborhood areas, and is subject to change based on input provided during the development of the Community Agenda.

Downtown Augusta Neighborhood Area

Downtown Augusta is where the city was founded and first developed. Downtown has the major characteristics of a traditional central business district, including a wide variety of land uses (retail, office, cultural, entertainment, financial, government, open space, industrial and institutional), high level of access for vehicles, pedestrians and transit, a mix of architectural styles, medium to high-density residential development, and commercial buildings with no front or side setbacks. Over two dozen downtown properties are listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places. Much of downtown is within the boundaries of a National Register Historic District and / or a local historic district. Downtown Augusta borders the Savannah River and is bisected by part of the Augusta Canal National Historic Landmark.

Old Augusta Neighborhood Area

This neighborhood area includes the following Augusta neighborhoods that predate consolidation of the city and county:

1. Olde Town
2. May Park
3. Uptown
4. Laney-Walker
5. Bethlehem
6. Turpin Hill
7. Harrisburg (including the area formerly known as West End)
8. Academy-Baker
9. Pendleton King
10. Summerville
11. Sand Hills
12. Highland Park
13. Forest Hills
14. Albion Acres / Forest Acres

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Most of these neighborhoods developed prior to World War II and reflect the major characteristics of so-called “traditional” neighborhoods. These characteristics include small and irregular-shaped lots, a wide variety of housing types, medium-density residential development, access to public transit, sidewalks and street trees, building close to or at the front of the property line, narrow setbacks between buildings, neighborhood-scale businesses, and civic and institutional uses scattered throughout the area. Neighborhoods in the “traditional” category include Olde Town, May Park, Laney-Walker, Bethlehem, Turpin Hill, Harrisburg, Academy-Baker, Pendleton King, Summerville and Sand Hills. All, or parts, of the following neighborhoods are National Register Historic Districts: Olde Town, Bethlehem, Laney-Walker, Harrisburg, Sand Hills and Summerville. August state University is located in Summerville, and Daniel Field Airport, Trinity Hospital and the Uptown Division of the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center are located in Highland Park.

Among the “traditional” neighborhoods, several have been identified as areas of significant disinvestment, high levels of poverty and / or unemployment. Neighborhood plans completed in the 1990s documented these conditions in the following neighborhoods: Olde Town, May Park, Laney-Walker, Bethlehem, Turpin Hill, Harrisburg (including West End) and Sand Hills.

With the exception of Uptown, the remaining old city neighborhoods reflect a combination of characteristics found in traditional neighborhoods and post-war suburbs. Among the characteristics that distinguish Highland Park, Albion Acres and Forest Hills as newer areas are the predominance of single-family detached units on lots of similar size, residential uses separated from other uses, a varied street pattern with curvilinear patterns predominating, few, if any, sidewalks, off-street parking with driveways and commercial uses at the edge of the neighborhood.

Uptown is unique among the neighborhoods because it reflects a traditional residential neighborhood that has gradually come to be dominated by the medical complex, commercial land uses, professional offices and Paine College. Low density residential development is still evident on 2-3 streets in the northwest corner of the neighborhood, but the only other concentration of residences are in the Peabody and Gilbert Manor public housing complexes. Gilbert Manor residents are soon to be relocated and the property sold, most likely for use by the Medical College of Georgia.

West Augusta Neighborhood Area

West Augusta is an area reflecting the suburban development patterns of the least 50-60 years. Low-density residential subdivisions dating from the 1950’s-1980s are predominant in the area. Apartment complexes of varying ages are scattered throughout the area. Developable land has become scarcer in recent years, resulting in the development of more attached townhouse and condominium complexes. Public transit service is more limited than it is in the old city neighborhoods.

The commercial development in West Augusta is characterized by shopping centers, professional offices and entertainment establishments arranged in a linear pattern along the major streets and highways and clustered near interstate highway interchanges. The Augusta Exchange Shopping Center functions as a regional commercial center. Low-density light industrial and warehousing uses are located in close

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proximity to interstate interchanges. The one sizable heavy industry is the Martin Marietta rock quarry located between Riverwatch Parkway and the Augusta Canal.

The Augusta Canal is a historic resource and linear greenspace trail of regional, state and national significance. Additional greenspace areas and potential linear trail routes are scattered throughout the area. Gateways into the city include I-20 at Riverwatch Parkway, I-20 at Washington Road and Riverwatch Parkway from I-20 to downtown. The Augusta National Golf Course is a major landmark in the area.

South Augusta Neighborhood Area

South Augusta is another area largely characterized by a suburban pattern of development. Residential development is characterized by low-density subdivisions with mostly single-family detached units on uniform lots approximately ¼-acre in size. Subdivision development started in part of South Augusta as early as the 1940s and continues to the present day. Apartment complexes are scattered throughout the area and usually located in close proximity to employment centers, shopping and major roads. Curvilinear street patterns predominate, there are generally few amenities for pedestrians (i.e. sidewalks, crosswalks), and transit service is more limited than in the old city neighborhoods.

Institutional uses, mostly churches, are also scattered throughout the area. There is a concentration of larger institutional uses, including the East Central Georgia Regional Hospital, Regional Youth Detention Center and Development Campus and the Chares B. Webster Detention Center, located in the area of Mike Padgett Highway (SR 56) and Phinizy Road. Augusta Technical College represents another major institutional use and regional activity center.

The commercial development in South Augusta is characterized by shopping centers, small strip centers, professional offices and individual commercial establishments arranged in a linear pattern along the major streets and highways and clustered near interstate highway (I-520) interchanges. The Augusta Mall functions as a regional commercial center and is located where South Augusta joins two other character areas. There is a limited amount of industrial and warehousing development scattered around the area. Some of the older industry is clustered near the Gordon highway. Newer light industrial uses tended to be located on arterial and collector roads near the Bobby Jones Expressway. Rocky Creek and Butler Creek are the most significant natural resources / conservation areas in South Augusta. Greenspace has been acquired for permanent protection along Butler Creek.

East Augusta Neighborhood Area

East Augusta is characterized by a mix of natural resource areas, industrial uses and limited residential and commercial land uses. Residential development includes some conventional subdivisions dating from the 1950s -1970s, some apartment complexes and newer townhouse and condominium development, some of which is located along the Savannah Riverfront. The conventional subdivisions are concentrated in the northeast (e.g. Hornsby, Eastview, Marion Homes), central (e.g. Hyde Park, Aragon Park, Lombardy and Virginia Heights) and south central (e.g. Apple Valley) parts of East Augusta. All of these conventional subdivisions are located in relatively close proximity to industrial land uses.

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Commercial development is fairly limited and characterized by stand-alone businesses such as convenience stores, gas/food marts, fast-food restaurants. East Augusta is home too much of Augusta's warehousing, light industry and heavy industry. Heavy industries include those producing chemicals, paper and wood products, clay products, transportation equipment and food products. Warehousing facilities tend to be located in close proximity to the surface transportation network especially along the major highways and near interstate interchanges, or in close proximity to railroad lines.

The floodplains of the Savannah River and some of its tributary creeks (Oates, Rocky, Butler and Spirit) account for the largest land use in East Augusta. Within these floodplains are some designated natural resource / conservation areas including the Merry Brickyard Ponds, the Phinizy Swamp Wildlife Management Area and the Phinizy Swamp Nature Park. Augusta Regional Airport at Bush Field is a significant regional activity center located in East Augusta.

Belair Neighborhood Area

Belair includes land uses and development patterns typical of suburban developing areas, rural residential areas and highway commercial corridors. These development patterns are influenced to one extent or another by the area's proximity to Doctor's Hospital, Fort Gordon, regional shopping centers (e.g. Augusta Mall, Augusta Exchange), Interstates 20 and 520 and Jimmie Dyess Parkway.

Low-density, suburban residential development started to occur in the 1950s and accelerated in the last 25 years. The opening of Jimmie Dyess Parkway in 1998 fueled the development of several new subdivisions in the last decade. Most of the conventional subdivisions are in the area bounded by Gordon Highway, Powell Road, Wrightsboro Road and the Bobby Jones Expressway. Higher density single-family development and apartment complexes are clustered in the area around Doctor's Hospital. Rural residential uses, mostly a mix of stick-built and manufactured homes on larger lots, characterize the area west of Powell Road to the Columbia County line, and along part of Wrightsboro Road and Maddox Road.

Suburban commercial development in the area has been fairly steady over the last couple of decades. The area around Doctor's Hospital and along Wheeler Road has been gradually developing with a mix of professional offices, suburban and highway-oriented commercial uses and service establishments. The frontage roads bordering Interstates 20 and 520 include a mix of shopping centers, offices, standalone commercial, light industry and warehousing and institutional uses. The recently-opened T-Mobile Customer Service Center and the soon-to-be-constructed Automatic Data Processing, Inc. facility are indicative of the types of service companies attracted to the area.

South Richmond Neighborhood Area

South Richmond is another part of the city undergoing a transition. Rural residences, woodlands, open space and agricultural uses predominate, but some conventional suburban residential development is taking place. The rural residential development pattern is characterized by stick-built and manufactures houses on lots exceeding $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre in size. South Richmond has a high number of flagpole lot developments. These rural residences tend to front or have access to the major arterial and collector roads in the area. Woodlands, open space and agricultural uses are scattered throughout the area.

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Significant natural resources include the floodplains and wetlands of the Savannah River and the tributary creeks that drain the area (Spirit, Little Spirit and McBean). Aquifer recharge areas underlay much of the South Richmond area. The Spirit Creek Educational Forest is a conservation use located in the area.

Standalone commercial establishments are scattered throughout the area and serve both local residents and those passing through on the major highways. The Albion Kaolin mine is the largest industry in this part of the city. The Augusta Corporate Park is a 1,730-acre industrial site owned and marketed by the Development Authority of Richmond County. It is located on State Route 56 (Mike Padgett Highway) near the Burke County line. Community facilities and institutional uses include the county landfill, the Gracewood Division of the East Central Georgia Regional Hospital, public schools, fire stations and recreation facilities. Among the factors contributing to the transition that South Richmond is undergoing are the following:

- Extension of water and sewer service
- Construction of new community facilities
- Lower cost of land
- Improvements to the road network
- Proximity of the area to major roads

Fort Gordon Neighborhood Area

Fort Gordon is a federal military reservation covering approximately 44,000 acres in southwest Augusta. Fort Gordon is the home of the U. S. Army Signal School and Center, the military's the largest training facility in communications and electronics. The installation is also home to the Southeast Regional Medical, Dental and Veterinary Commands as well as the Army's only dental laboratory. Also stationed on the installation are the National Security Agency–Georgia, and three deployable brigades: the 35th Signal Brigade, the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade and the 359th Signal Brigade. As the largest employer in Augusta, Fort Gordon's economic impact on the local community is approximately \$1.4 billion. This figure includes payroll, purchases, contracts, services and new construction.

Land uses on the Fort include residences, offices, training facilities, recreation facilities, commercial establishments, a hospital, an elementary school, open space and operations and maintenance facilities. A substantial amount of the fort's acreage is wooded and / or used for training.

ADJOINING COMMUNITIES IN RICHMOND COUNTY

Hephzibah

Hephzibah is a small city with approximately 4,250 residents (Census Estimate, 2006) located in south central Richmond County. For many years, the geographic limits of the city extended in a one-mile radius from a point in downtown Hephzibah. As a result, the oldest homes and commercial establishments are located in downtown Hephzibah. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the city annexed additional acreage in then-unincorporated Richmond County. By the time Augusta and Richmond County consolidated, Hephzibah covered over 19 square miles. Today, Hephzibah's downtown includes

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a mix of old and new development (residential, commercial and institutional), with county schools and recreation facilities close by. Away from downtown, Hephzibah is characterized by a mix of rural residences, suburban residences, open space, woodlands and spot commercial uses. Hephzibah participates with Augusta in a Service Delivery Strategy.

Blythe

Blythe is a small city of approximately 790 residents (Census Estimate, 2006) located in southwest Richmond County. Blythe is a historic community consisting of a residential / institutional core surrounded by agricultural and rural residential uses. Residential uses include a mix of older stick-built homes and manufactures houses.

Until some small annexations in the early 1990s, the limits of the community extended in a one-mile radius from the center of Blythe. At 2.5 square miles, Blythe is still relatively small. Blythe also participates with Augusta in a Service Delivery Strategy.

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NEIGHBORHOOD (CHARACTER) AREA	DESCRIPTION	TRENDS / OPPORTUNITIES
Downtown Augusta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic central business district • Mix of land uses • High level of access for vehicles, pedestrians and transit • Mix of architectural styles (residential, commercial, institutional, etc.) • Taller buildings with no front / side setbacks • Gateways to the city • Savannah Riverfront • Augusta Canal – Regionally Important Resource • Historic districts and properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalization efforts have resulted in many significant public and private projects in last 20 years • Additional public and private investment ongoing and / or planned • Opportunities for infill development • Business Improvement District established and staffed • More people living downtown • Planning underway for next phase of revitalization
Old City Neighborhoods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olde Town • May Park • Laney-Walker • Bethlehem • Turpin Hill • Harrisburg (incl. former West End) • Academy-Baker • Summerville • Sand Hills • Forest Hills • Pendleton-King • Highland Park • Albion Acres / Forest Acres • Uptown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes neighborhoods within the old city limits of Augusta • Examples of the following neighborhood types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional – Stable • Traditional – Transitioning • Traditional – Redeveloping • Suburban – Built-Out • Neighborhood-scale businesses scattered throughout the area • Historic districts and properties • Augusta Canal – Regionally Important Resource • Civic and institutional uses scattered throughout the area • Regional Activity Centers (medical complex, colleges) • Daniel Village Shopping Center (first suburban-style shopping center in Augusta) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some neighborhoods are stable; others need or undergoing redevelopment; Uptown continues transition due to expansion of medical complex • Area largely built out, though there are opportunities for infill development in redeveloping neighborhoods and on sites near Forest Hills Golf Course • Neighborhood preservation • Balance growth of activity centers with neighborhood preservation
West Augusta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes area northwest of the old city to the Columbia County line. Predominant characteristics include: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely Built Out • Neighborhood preservation • Open space preservation • Preservation of natural

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban Areas - Built-Out • Suburban Commercial Corridors • Regional Activity Center – Augusta Exchange & environs • Gateways – I-20@Riverwatch, I-20@Washington Rd. • Augusta Canal – Regionally Important Resource • Environmentally sensitive areas – floodplains, wetlands and watersheds • Greenspace – Rae’s Creek @ Ingleside Dr. • Augusta National Golf Course • Major Highway Corridors – I-20 & I-520 • Martin Marietta Quarry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resources • Attached townhouse and condominium developments, most developed within past 10-15 years • Commercial redevelopment ongoing (older shopping centers; motels and hotels) • Low-density light industrial and warehousing development in recent years • Expansion / upgrades of interstates and related interchanges ongoing • Future development on remaining parcels near interstate interchanges
South Augusta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes area southwest of the old city between Mike Padgett Hwy. (SR 56), Spirit Creek and Fort Gordon. Predominant characteristics include: • Suburban Areas - Built-Out • Suburban Areas - Developing • Suburban Commercial Corridors • Light and Heavy Industrial • Major Highway Corridor – I-520 • Major Institutions – Webster Detention Center, YDC, Georgia Regional, Augusta Tech. • Regional Activity Centers – Augusta Mall, Augusta Tech., Diamond Lakes Park • Conservation Area and Greenspace – Butler Creek • Environmentally sensitive areas – floodplains, wetlands and watersheds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood preservation • Open space preservation • Preservation of natural resources • Opportunities for infill development • Some older “first ring” suburbs in need of rehabilitation / redevelopment • Redevelopment of Regency Mall property and environs • Redevelopment of older shopping centers • Attracting more retail, entertainment and service businesses to south Augusta • Pending road improvement projects to improve safety and access • Development of linear greenspace trail and bike and pedestrian network
East Augusta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes area east and southeast of old city limits between the Savannah River, Mike Padgett Hwy. (SR 56) and Spirit Creek. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional residential development limited by proximity to industry, contaminated industrial sites

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	<p>Predominant characteristics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban-style residential subdivisions, apartment complexes and riverfront condominiums • Light and Heavy Industrial Areas • Major Highway Corridor – I-520 • Gateways – Sand Bar Ferry Rd., Palmetto Pkwy (I-520) from S.C., Augusta Regional Airport, Doug Barnard Pkwy @ Gordon Hwy. • Regional Activity Center – Augusta Regional Airport • Conservation Areas and Greenspace – Phinizy Swamp and Wildlife Management Area • Environmentally sensitive areas – floodplains, wetlands and watersheds 	<p>and the presence of natural resource / conservation areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some neighborhood revitalization is ongoing • Clean-up and stabilization of Hyde Park neighborhood and environs • Create opportunities for additional commercial development serving area residents • Additional industrial development likely in proximity to airport and major highways • Protection of natural resources and conservation areas
Belair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes area bounded by I-520, Gordon Hwy. and the Columbia County line. Predominant characteristics include: • Suburban Areas – Developing • Rural Residential • Highway Commercial Corridor • Rural Residential • Regional Activity Center – Doctor's Hospital and environs • Gateways – Wheeler Road @ I-20, Gordon Highway (from Columbia Co., Wrightsboro Rd. (from Jimmie Dyess Pkwy.) • Environmentally sensitive areas – floodplains, wetlands and watersheds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood preservation • Open space preservation • Preservation of natural resources • Continued general transition of the area from rural residential to urban mixed-use • Continued expansion of low and medium density suburban residential • Road improvement projects influencing development and land speculation • Extension / expansion of sewer service • Added missions at Fort Gordon • Expansion of medical services and offices, facilities to serve the elderly, highway-oriented commercial and light-industry / warehousing uses
South Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suburban Areas - Developing • Rural Residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued transition of areas to suburban

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Areas • Woodlands / Timberland • Environmentally sensitive areas – floodplains, wetlands and watersheds • Conservation Area – Spirit Creek • Limited commercial and industrial development • Albion Kaolin Mine • Gateways (Hwy 1, Hwy 25 and Hwy. 56) 	<p>development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional commercial on spot basis • Demand for more public services and facilities • Some current residents like the semi-rural atmosphere and oppose commercial development • Future use of the Augusta Corporate Park Industrial site
Fort Gordon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44,000+ acre federal military installation with a mix of land uses (residential, office, commercial, elementary school, training, medical, recreation, conservation and natural resources, woodlands, transportation, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of water and sewer service by the City of Augusta • Continued positive impact of the Fort on Augusta and the metropolitan area • Construction of new housing • Construction of National Security Agency facility • Addition of new missions on-post • Implementation of recommendations in Joint Land Use Study
Hephzibah (Not a neighborhood area but an adjoining community in Richmond County)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small city characterized by older central core, newer subdivisions, agricultural and open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue intergovernmental coordination through the adopted Service Delivery Strategy and other initiatives
Blythe (Not a neighborhood area but an adjoining community in Richmond County)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small town located in southwest corner of Richmond County and characterized by a historic central core, some newer subdivisions, agricultural and limited institutional uses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue intergovernmental coordination through the adopted Service Delivery Strategy and other initiatives